

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for making an absorbent composite from a continuous tow comprising the steps of:

- spreading a crimped tow;
- de-registering the crimped tow;
- shaping the de-registered tow; and
- distributing a particulate onto the shaped tow wherein particulate distribution being controlled ~~through a shaped orifice~~ by a vibratory particulate feeder coupled to a trough, and a plate and the trough defining a shaped orifice.

2. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the shaped orifice being rectangular.

3. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the shaped orifice being triangular.

4. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the shaped orifice being serrated or toothed.

5. (original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising shaping the de-registered tow to a substantially rectangular cross-section.

6. (original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising applying a liquid to the tow.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus for making an absorbent composite from a continuous tow comprising the steps of:

means for spreading a crimped tow;

means for de-registering the crimped tow;

means for shaping the de-registered tow; and

means for distributing a particulate onto the shaped tow wherein particulate distribution being controlled ~~through a shaped orifice~~ by a vibratory particulate feeder coupled to a trough, and a plate and the trough defining a shaped orifice.

8. (original) The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein the shaped orifice being rectangular.

9. (original) The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein the shaped orifice being triangular.

10. (original) The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein the shaped orifice being serrated or toothed.

11. (original) The apparatus of Claim 7 further comprising means for shaping the de-registered tow to a substantially rectangular cross-section.

12. (original) The apparatus of Claim 7 further comprising means for applying a liquid to the tow.